

Serial No. 09/972,448  
Response dated February 5, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of 11/05/03

Docket No. 5000-4960

**IN THE CLAIMS**

**Please amend claims 1 and 3 as follows:**

1. (Currently Amended) A joining structure comprising:

a first member having a serration portion provided at a pressure insertion end portion of the first member;

a second member having a pressure insertion portion to be pressure-inserted and joined to the serration portion, wherein the first member has a surface contact portion at a location adjacent to the serration portion to be surface-contacted with the second member, the surface contact portion includes a step portion provided ~~between~~ at a leading end portion of the pressure insertion end portion ~~and~~ at a leading end side from the serration portion to extend in an axial direction, and ~~a~~ an outer diameter of the step portion is equal to ~~a~~ an inner diameter of the pressure insertion portion or set between the diameter of the pressure insertion portion and ~~a~~ an outer diameter of the serration portion;

the first member is a metal yoke of a propeller shaft; and

the second member is a fiberglass reinforced plastic cylinder of the propeller shaft.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:

the serration portion is provided to an outer circumferential surface of the pressure insertion end portion;

the pressure insertion portion of the second member is hollow; and  
~~an~~ the outer diameter of the step portion is not smaller than ~~an~~ the inner diameter of the pressure insertion portion, and is smaller than ~~an~~ the outer diameter of the serration portion.

4. (Withdrawn) A joining structure according to claim 2, wherein:

the pressure insertion end portion of the first member is hollow;  
the serration portion is portion is provided to an inner circumferential surface of the pressure insertion portion; and  
an inner diameter of the step portion is not larger than the pressure insertion portion, and is larger than an inner diameter of the serration portion.

5. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:

the first member is a metal member; and  
the second member is a resin member.

6. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
after the second member is joined to the serration portion of the first member, the step portion is in non-contact with the second member.

7. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:

the first member has a chamfering portion extended from the leading end portion to the step portion.

8. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface.
9. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface; and  
a relief portion in the form of a recess is provided to a connection portion between the inclined surface and the step portion.
10. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 9, wherein:  
the step portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the step portion is made smaller toward the leading end portion.
11. (Withdrawn) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
the step portion is tapered so that the inner diameter of step portion is made larger toward the leading end portion.
12. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 9, wherein:  
the serration portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the serration portion is made smaller toward to the leading end portion.
13. (Withdrawn) A joining structure according to claim 4, wherein:

the serration portion is tapered so that the inner diameter of the serration portion is made larger toward the leading end portion.

14. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
the step portion is formed by partially removing addendum portions of the serration portion.

15. (Previously Presented) A joining structure according to claim 1, wherein:  
the step portion is formed cylindrically between the leading end portion and the serration portion.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Withdrawn) A propeller shaft having the joining structure according to claim 1, in which the second member has a hollow portion at an end portion, and the first member is inserted into the hollow portion, wherein:

the serration portion is provided to an outer circumferential surface of an insertion portion of the first member;

grooves are provided to an inner circumferential surface of the hollow portion to engage the serration portion; and

the surface contact portion includes an inclination suppressing surface that is provided on the outer circumferential surface of the insertion portion and behind the serration portion in an insertion direction, and that is surface-contacted with the inner circumferential surface of the hollow portion to suppress an inclination of the first member during insertion.

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18. (Withdrawn) A propeller shaft according to claim 17, wherein:

two serration portions are provided to be spaced in the insertion direction as first and second serration portions; and

the inclination suppressing surface is provided behind either one or both of the first serration portion located forwardly in the insertion direction and the second serration portion located rearward in the insertion direction.

19. (Withdrawn) A propeller shaft according to claim 17, wherein:

the surface contact portion includes a guide surface that is provided to the outer circumferential surface of the insertion portion to the outer circumferential surface of the insertion portion at its forward end and forwardly of the serration portion in the insertion direction, and that is surface-contacted with the inner circumferential surface of the hollow portion to ensure concentricity of shaft members during start of insertion.

20. (Withdrawn) A propeller shaft according to claim 19, wherein:

the guide surface and the inclination suppressing surface are substantially equal to each other in diameter.

21. - 23. (Cancelled).

24. (New) A joining structure comprising:

a first member having a serration portion provided at a pressure insertion end portion of the first member;

a second member having a pressure insertion portion to be pressure-inserted and joined to the serration portion, wherein the first member has a surface contact portion at a location adjacent to the serration portion to be surface-contacted with the second member, the surface contact portion includes a step portion provided between a leading end portion of the pressure insertion end portion and the serration portion to extend in an axial direction, and a diameter of the step portion is equal to a diameter of the pressure insertion portion or set between the diameter of the pressure insertion portion and a diameter of the serration portion;

the first member is a metal yoke of a propeller shaft;

the second member is a fiberglass reinforced plastic cylinder of the propeller shaft; and

wherein the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface.

25. (New) A joining structure comprising:

a first member having a serration portion provided at a pressure insertion end portion of the first member;

a second member having a pressure insertion portion to be pressure-inserted and joined to the serration portion, wherein the first member has a surface contact portion at a location adjacent to the serration portion to be surface-contacted with the second member, the surface contact portion includes a step portion provided between a leading end

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portion of the pressure insertion end portion and the serration portion to extend in an axial direction, and a diameter of the step portion is equal to a diameter of the pressure insertion portion or set between the diameter of the pressure insertion portion and a diameter of the serration portion;

the first member is a metal yoke of a propeller shaft;

the second member is a fiberglass reinforced plastic cylinder of the propeller shaft;

the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface; and

a relief portion in the form of a recess is provided to a connection portion between the inclined surface and the step portion.

26. (New) A joining structure comprising:

a first member having a serration portion provided at a pressure insertion end portion of the first member;

a second member having a pressure insertion portion to be pressure-inserted and joined to the serration portion, wherein the first member has a surface contact portion at a location adjacent to the serration portion to be surface-contacted with the second member, the surface contact portion includes a step portion provided between a leading end portion of the pressure insertion end portion and the serration portion to extend in an axial direction, and a diameter of the step portion is equal to a diameter of the pressure insertion

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portion or set between the diameter of the pressure insertion portion and a diameter of the serration portion;

the first member is a metal yoke of a propeller shaft;

the second member is a fiberglass reinforced plastic cylinder of the propeller shaft;

wherein the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface;

a relief portion in the form of a recess is provided to a connection portion between the inclined surface and the step portion; and

wherein the step portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the step portion is made smaller toward the leading end portion.

27. (New) A joining structure comprising:

a first member having a serration portion provided at a pressure insertion end portion of the first member;

a second member having a pressure insertion portion to be pressure-inserted and joined to the serration portion, wherein the first member has a surface contact portion at a location adjacent to the serration portion to be surface-contacted with the second member, the surface contact portion includes a step portion provided between a leading end portion of the pressure insertion end portion and the serration portion to extend in an axial direction, and a diameter of the step portion is equal to a diameter of the pressure insertion portion or set between the diameter of the pressure insertion portion and a diameter of the serration portion;

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the first member is a metal yoke of a propeller shaft;  
the second member is a fiberglass reinforced plastic cylinder of the propeller shaft;  
wherein the step portion is connected to the serration portion through an inclined surface;

a relief portion in the form of a recess is provided to a connection portion between the inclined surface and the step portion; and

wherein the serration portion is tapered so that the outer diameter of the serration portion is made smaller toward to the leading end portion.